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Various Conceptions of the Role of the Educational Philosopher

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Chapter I

VARIOUS CONCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHER

Introduction

In any age there has been a constant need to re-appraise the proper role of any given group in society. This has been true of the doctor, lawyer, teacher, theologian, among others. Inasmuch as there exists this seemingly perennial activity, though often there is not adequate time provided for it, it might be fitting to examine here and now the proper role of the educational philosopher in an era of extreme cultural anxiety.

It has been said recently by a visiting Japanese educator, who had visited here in the 1920's, that he had sensed a feeling of direction where education was concerned. The motivation for this direction, he felt, was not always accepted, since it largely emanated from the thinking and writing of John Dewey and his disciples; however, he felt some sense of direction was present. Upon his recent visit he sensed that even this much direction was lacking.

Whether or not this could be accepted as truly reflective of our age is not the point; rather, it serves as a point of dramatic emphasis. Though Dewey's role was not primarily that of educational philosopher, his persistent interest in effecting a more deliberate interaction on the part of school and society was never ending. The educational enterprise was waiting for direction for the first half of the twentieth century just as is the second half. At the present time, no apparent consensus seems to stand which could put this direction in motion.

Alternatives are being posed constantly which might offer education a possible course to follow. Panaceas for education's ills appear without due consideration of their consequences for the future. The alternatives and panaceas are often compromises of past educational activity, and lack the vigor or reasonableness of bold experimentation. Their proposed content lacks any mild adventure or real excitement. Those who hearken to the virtues of the past are not willing to verify their worth by making their choices consistent with the most rigorous empirical tests; those who insist that the perpetually tentative present is foremost often fail to provide the method which makes such a condition flourish; those who speak glowingly about a predictive future need to educate us in the ways of finding security in uncertainty.

Educational and philosophical literature abounds in extolling the worth of each of these and many more genuine alternatives; therefore, it will not be the intent here to do likewise. It might be adequate enough to point out merely that the educational philosopher needs precise skills, information, and talents which would make each of these intelligible to him. He is committed to make a choice amongst these or others. Once he has done this, then a particular kind of behavior will ensue. His choice will necessarily involve him in a fuller or lesser use of science and its methods. He will either become more or less interested in human arrangements which can make men free to create new patterns of beauty, goodwill, love, and

thoughtfulness. These concerns to be followed to their logical conclusions would involve only the most thoughtful efforts, notwithstanding the fact that our society does not find its members so arranged as to permit this specialized kind of inquiry. Since the teacher, the parent, as purveyors of this kind of education often feel the need for direction, there has been an increasing use made of the educational philosopher.[1]

The professional philosopher has been omitted too often in this communication scheme. The reasons for this are many. Often his talents have not cared, nor have been free because of disposition, conventions, or training to deal with such affairs. As will be pointed out by various contributors to this issue, philosophers have been concerned deeply about education and its proper functions — whether it be to preserve the best in the culture, or to involve everyone in conscious activity and participation in the ongoing affairs of everyday life, or to prepare people for a more knowing tomorrow. This point can be further elaborated upon in the case of Plato.

His political ideals, in order to be implemented, had to take education into account very early lest they never be realized. Aristotle's recognition of the importance of the aims of education raised an issue still being pondered by all, whether the moral or the intellectual virtue is to receive prior or equal attention from the teacher. And so on does the progression of interest develop for relating educational practice and theory. Many factors — social, cultural, political — quickened the conscience of the masses for education's necessity. Education in the twentieth century became an imperative, not a luxury or a gift if chance permitted. The urgings of many have made this necessity more nearly realizable.

Universal education was launched as a vast experiment — the findings and the conclusions of which have not yet been fully revealed because the conceptions of its nature, its purposes, its methods, its goals, its proper maintenance have not been agreed upon. Its importance has known greatness and mildness as our culture moves through periods of economic depression and plentitude, of hot and cold wars, of a rising nationalistic superiority in some parts of the world.

The content of education, what is being emphasized or de-emphasized, can almost certainly reflect the trend of the times. Apparently respected aims of one period can be forgotten completely if a cultural vicissitude of the moment overpowers it. Must the course of education be so easily upset? If a society's cultural perspective included in it some agreement concerning its values, then might such a directionless situation be altered for the better? It might be well then for the educational philosopher to maintain closer communication with values which have created confusion in the conduct of educating, as well as those which seem to offer hope for new direction and order. Such sensitivity might well be developed.

[1] This issue is not intended as a technical statement to educational philosophers solely. It hopes to include, among its readers, laymen, methodologists, scientists of education, and other interested persons. The educational philosopher wants to relate his particular discipline to the total affairs of the educative process. This desire is sometimes misunderstood by the various members of society. Take the scientist of education as an example. For the most part he is more directly involved with the explanatory, statistically normative and technological phases of the teaching-learning act than is the educational philosopher. This need not imply that the latter ought not be concerned with these phases, also. It is hoped that this brief statement might open up some possibilities for wider communication and participation among all members involved in the vastness of the educational process.

If such a development is needed, in what ways can it be done? The educational philosopher can place his faith in the past which allegedly contains respected values; he could prefer to get them from the solution of problems of the present; he might prefer to ascertain their conduct from the findings of the social, cultural, and behavioral sciences; still further, he might create language and symbols for new values. As in the first case, he might seek religious authority for this derivation process; in the second case, he might well make active and conscious use of the methods of science or the democratic ethic; in the third case, he might make use of scientific progress in all of man's creative activities; lastly, he might employ the techniques of the contributors to philosophical analysis. In any event, the human community awaits those values which can lead it to a plan insuring continuance and survival.

Many educational philosophers are conceiving their role to be many sided. Some feel that it is not necessary for them to provide another system or educational doctrine, nor to compare various systems; rather, it is their task to question pervasive conceptual problems. This would involve extended conversations between philosopher and educator. Just as philosophers are divided by their countless "ists" and "isms," so are educators. The hearty suspicions held by each side could be expressed here; rather, it might be said that both are brandishing the other less and less with epithets hardly becoming to men of learning.

Morton White[2] indicates that a substantial portion of recent philosophy has been critical, scientific, and analytic in temper. If such were accepted as an appropriate function of the educational philosopher, he might function in the way that has been so significantly stated:[3]

> ". . . when he conceives his function to be neither the spinning out of implications from general doctrines nor the authoritative pronouncement of basic and intermediate values for the guidance of schools . . . . He can try to clarify our fundamental ways of thinking about education: the concepts we employ, the inferences we make, and the choices we express. He can render explicit the criteria of judgment we use in reaching educational decisions. He can test our common assumptions indirectly by striving for a systematic picture that will embrace them all. He can analyze the major positions taken on issues of educational policy by exposing their premises, consequences, and alternatives. In sum, he can improve *our understanding* of educational contexts and the problems they generate. . . . ."

The vigor of this conception of the educational philosopher would rest with his use of language and symbolism. Needless to say, he would need to make a fuller scientific study of language.

The philosopher of education, assuming this role, would find such concerns as these to be uppermost in his thinking: education and the science of education; the scientist's role and the aims of education; moral philos-

[2] M. White, *The Age of Analysis.* New York: The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1955.

[3] I. Scheffler, *Modern Readings, Philosophy and Education.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1958, p. 5.

ophy and education; decisions of principle; knowing how and knowing that; the methods of science: what are they? can they be taught?; is the teaching of the scientific method a significant educational objective; tradition and the traditionalist; reasons in art criticism; modern education and its critics.[4] Such a listing clearly indicates that these are all issues within a wider range of educational indeterminancy. Energy must be given to the solving of these issues, else the course of education anywhere in the world will not be smooth.

Going from this particular view of the role and the tasks carved out for the philosopher of education, one might look to the conception of philosophy as a vision. This was particularly held by Dewey. His constant reiteration that man must have faith in the worth of human experience gives additional credence to this thought. All values, he felt, were not necessarily restricted to those ascertained by experimental procedures. Because of this visionary perceptiveness, he brought us to appreciate more forcibly the morality of democracy; the experimental method and its relevance for helping the young to develop fully; the nature of experience; another view of mind; the lost individual; broader concepts of method; the public and its problems involving social, cultural, industrial, political, and economic issues. This raises the question, can this same perceptiveness have relevance in the work of the educational philosopher today? Must he leave this thinking, and forge ahead to new ideas not yet conceived, or must he be fearful of leaving them behind?

It has been said that Dewey's primary concern was not that of an educational philosopher, but it can be said otherwise for William H. Kilpatrick. He did much to identify his role as an educational philosopher. In turn, this has influenced the conduct and direction of many who came under his guidance. He raises some questions that require very diligent thinking: what is the philosophy of education? what does it teach us? what does it tell us about education that we cannot otherwise find out? can it help us, practically, to run a schoolroom? or a school system? can it help parents rear their children?[5]

After Kilpatrick worked through such questions with his students, his public, he would look to such concerns as the life process itself, the social nature of man, institutions, concepts of change, the culture, the individual and society, morality as a social necessity, respect for personality, democracy, the life good to live, the problem of progress, the philosophy of thinking, modern theories of learning, the building of interests, character building, the aesthetic life in education, and countless others. These were not vacuous topics unrelated to the thousands of teachers who studied with him; rather, they were ones with which they become intimately involved through rigorous debate, discussion, and experimentation.

Kilpatrick further helped his students come by a method of analysis: is the point of view defensible; has it been judged for its consistency; has it been judged for its inclusiveness; and has it been judged on the basis of the values it upholds and acts upon?[6]

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[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 2, vii–ix.

[5] W. H. Kilpatrick, *Philosophy of Education.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951, pp. ix–x.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.

And Kilpatrick goes on to say,

> ". . . Do these criteria mean that most people cannot have a philosophy, that 'only professional' philosophers can have one? The answer is no; any person who is willing to question his present point of view, who is open to critical examination of his own views and those of others, who is earnest in his search for deeper, finer, more defensible values, can build a philosophy. . . ."[7]

Many philosophers could take exception to this attitude toward philosophizing, but this in effect, is largely what the philosopher of education is attempting at all times in his teaching.

There are many other alternatives and approaches, to be sure, in identifying the proper role of the educational philosopher, and beyond this introductory attempt there remains much to be said in this process. The remainder of the issue shall be devoted to the following topics: (1) philosophy and philosophy of education,[8] (2) the dichotomy between ends and means in American education,[9] (3) evaluation as a key process for establishing the relationship between ends and means,[10] (4) participation as a purpose in education,[11] (5) the educational philosopher as "liaison officer,"[12] (6) some concluding considerations.[13]

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[7] *Op. cit.*, p. 8.

[8] Richard Millard, Chairman, Department of Philosophy, College of Liberal Arts, Boston University, in collaboration with Peter Bertocci, Professor, Department of Philosophy, Boston University.

[9] Howard Leavitt, Associate Professor of Secondary Education, School of Education, Boston University.

[10] William Kvaraceus, Professor of Educational Evaluation and Measurement, Boston University, in collaboration with Howard Leavitt.

[11] J. J. Chambliss, Instructor of Educational History and Philosophy, School of Education, Boston University.

[12] Theodore Brameld, Professor of Educational Philosophy, School of Education, Boston University.

[13] J. J. Chambliss and Gene D. Phillips.

Chapter II

PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

To talk about the relation between philosophy and philosophy of education or educational theory as though one were talking about two totally different disciplines or areas of investigation is to confuse issues at the outset and to perpetuate a relatively recent divorce which the authors feel should never have occurred. When in 1954 a joint committee of the Boston University graduate department of philosophy and the department of Social Foundations in the School of Education began discussion of the possibility of a program for a doctorate of philosophy in philosophy of education we found that only eleven institutions in the country offered such a degree and that of these only two required any specific course work in the field of philosophy as such. To many members of the American Philosophical Association philosophy of education has tended to be an unrecognized stepchild. The inclusion of a symposium on philosophy of education at the fifty-second meeting of the Eastern Division held at Boston University in 1955 caused more than a few raised eyebrows.

This indifference of men in the general field of philosophy to philosophy of education has had its counterpart in an almost equal indifference to philosophy of education by professional educators. Far too frequently philosophy of education disappeared from education curricula altogether or, if it did appear, as former Dean Kandel has so strongly pointed out,[1] it too often was offered by persons with little or no philosophic training who had little to present in terms of philosophic content. This is not to say that through the second quarter of our century there were not exceedingly able men working in the area of philosophy of education, but it is to suggest that far too frequently these men were voices in the wilderness spurned both by "technical"educators and those who would call themselves "technical" philosophers.

And yet we would insist that not only philosophy and philosophy of education but also education in general are inseparably linked. The failure to recognize the inseparability of the link constitutes a peculiar sort of professional myopia on the part of all concerned. At the point at which communication among any of the three breaks down all three tend to be the losers. This is not to claim that all three are identical, nor is it to agree with Max Black that "in practice, philosophy of education becomes nothing less than philosophy, without qualification or restriction."[2] It is, however, to insist that each necessarily involves the other to a greater or lesser degree.

Our task at this point cannot be an exhaustive analysis of the relations among the three. Such an analysis would involve not only developing a complete philosophy of education but a detailed philosophy about philosophy of education. But we can at least suggest some of the major areas of mutual involvement and some of the dangers of misunderstanding the character of these involvements, as they appear from at least one philosophical perspective.

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[1] I. J. Kandel, "Philosophy of Education," *Harvard Educational Review*, 26 (1956), pp. 134–136.

[2] Max Black, "A Note on 'Philosophy of Education'," *Harvard Educational Review*, 26 (1956), p. 155.

If philosophy is conceived of not as an oracular deliverance of Olympian insights but as the persistent, critical, and systematic attempt to discover and consistently formulate in relation to each other the basic characteristics, meanings, and values of our experience in its widest perspectives, then a person engaged in philosophic investigation, of all persons, can least afford to overlook or fail to think critically about educational experience. From Plato to Dewey and Whitehead recognition of the central relation of educational philosophy to other specialized areas of philosophic investigation has characterized western thought.

It is exactly in the educational process that the problems of knowledge, of value, of what constitutes the good life or lives, of the kind of world we live in and what we can do about it become most crucial. Philosophically one is concerned with drawing out and making explicit presuppositions and meanings, with developing tools for critically evaluating these presuppositions and meanings in relation to each other and all available additional areas of experience. To a large extent it was the practical business of education and the need for clarification of what education is about that gave rise to the typical areas of philosophical investigation and not vice versa. It is no accident culturally or logically that the sophists (Greek educational practitioners) preceded and set the stage for Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Nor was it an accident that Plato's central work, *The Republic,* is basically a philosophy of education for the good society and the good life.

To put the matter in a slightly different way, philosophic investigation is not something that does or can occur in a cultural or personal vacuum. Of all disciplines it can least afford to remain indifferent to any pervasive area of human experience, for to do so is to deprive it of its content. The major philosophic positions, as Professor Brameld has suggested,[3] may well be described as critical "interpretations of cultural experience and hence, of the pervasive human problems always indigenous with that experience" or "as the articulated effort of any culture to give maximum meaning to itself." To this it must be added that few of the major philosophic positions are intentionally culturally exclusive, for, ideally at least, each of them must deal with cross-cultural reference and criteria of cross-cultural or intercultural as well as intracultural judgments. Nevertheless, insofar as education (not conceived of as restricted to the schools alone) is "the supreme human activity whereby any organized group seeks to perpetuate and modify its own way of life,"[4] education provides some of the most important data areas for philosophic investigation on the one hand, and philosophic investigation becomes a prerequisite to critical and directed as opposed to non-reflective and accidental education and educational planning on the other. A philosopher who is not willing to listen to and learn from the educator may be a linguistic technician in some restricted area but hardly a philosopher. An educator who is not philosophically literate in relation to his aims and presuppositions educationally may be an educational technician but he is operating blindly. The philosopher of education whose function it is to keep the vital discussion alive by bringing the resources of philosophy to bear on educational problems and the results of educational practice and discovery to bear on philosophic investigation needs to be

[3] Theodore Brameld, "Philosophy, Education, and the Human Sciences," *Harvard Educational Review,* 26 (1956), p. 137.

[4] *Ibid.*

particularly well grounded both theoretically and practically in both areas.

Every educational system or body of educational practices does involve some set of ends or aims felt to be of sufficient importance or value to be perpetuated, or strengthened, or created in individuals and the community by the particular processes of education as such. Without these no education would, in fact, occur. Quite apart from "schooling," the primitive father who teaches his child to fish and hunt does so for some end which he feels is of vital importance for the child, for himself, and for the community. This would seem to be obvious, and yet, what may not seem quite so obvious is that education is thus in its root conception purposive in character. As such, it inevitably involves a theory of value, including both a general theory of value or criteriology of values and an ethics and social philosophy (conceptions of the life and the community worth attaining). Today, for example, someone needs to face such questions as the following: Are we to educate for self-realization in community or efficiency in industrial production? Is communal adjustment more important than individual initiative? Is education for conformity or for creativity of prime importance?

The particular theory of value involved in a particular educational system or set of educational practices may be implicit or explicit, may be critically adopted in the light of thought through value criteria and awareness of the problems of value criteria or uncritically adopted via tradition, authority, inertia, or hasty judgment induced by crisis. In the light of present post-sputnik proposals, someone needs to ask: Is a crash program in the physical sciences with de-emphasis on the social sciences and humanities the most adequate way to meet the challenge of the "space age"? What kind of scientists and society would such a program produce? Are we willing to educate for security at any price?

In addition to a theory of value, every educational system or body of educational practices involves an epistemology, that is, a series of hypotheses or assumptions or presuppositions which constitute, when made explicit, a theory of knowledge. Such a theory of knowledge includes assumptions about the possibility and limits of knowledge, a conception of truth, and a criterion or criteria determining when truth is obtained or approached and how one goes about obtaining it. The form and techniques an educational system utilizes will be and have been rather strikingly different in a society in which it is assumed that the final court of appeal for truth and falsity lies in some one institution or document as contrasted with a society in which truth or the approach to it is considered to be determined by rational weighing of evidence.

Further, every educational system or body of educational practices involves at least some metaphysical presuppositions, that is, some conception of the nature of man and his place in the universe in the light of one's conception of the kind of universe this is. The segregationist and the desegregationist in actual practice hold quite different conceptions of what men really are. Somewhere this issue of what men in fact are needs to be faced. Such assumptions as the following lead to quite different educational practices and conceptions of the nature of education itself: All men are selfish; all men are altruistic; all men are economically determined; all men are only physiological organisms determined by stimulus-response patterns and conditioning; all men are children of God. The social sciences may help throw light on the accuracy of such assumptions but even this

help may be limited. In some cases at least, particular schools within the social sciences make such assumptions at the outset themselves and to appeal to these for proof is to beg the question. Again, in the educational process, these and other assumptions may be more or less explicit, more or less complete, and more or less critically assumed. Those who guide the educational processes may or may not have some explicit criteria or criterion of what constitutes reality. And yet the unavoidability of metaphysical assumptions is strikingly demonstrated by the fact that even those contemporary thinkers who would deny that a metaphysics is possible are asserting something about the amenability of the universe to human intelligence and thus are making metaphysical statements.

The function of a philosophy of education may be conceived in two ways —ways which are not mutually exclusive. On the one hand an educational philosopher may be concerned primarily with a critique of the philosophic assumptions of existing educational systems and practices. On this level his task is primarily analytic, that is, he is concerned with making explicit the implicit assumptions in any particular educational system and looking at them from the standpoint of their compatibility, consistency, and adequacy in the light of the growing body of knowledge in the social and physical sciences as well as the humanities and philosophic disciplines. He is concerned with developing critical acumen and purging discussion of fogginess, meaninglessness, and inconsistency. He is the educator become self-aware and self-critical. We have heard a great deal, for example, about education for democracy, but what kind of democracy are we educating for? Mussolini, Stalin, and Dewey agreed (surprisingly enough) that we should educate for "true" democracy, but each one's conception of "true" democracy was three worlds apart and so was each one's conception of education. To talk about education for democracy without clarification of terms is to compound confusion under cover of a warm feeling.

On the other hand, an educational philosopher may be primarily concerned not with a critique of existing educational systems so much as with developing a philosophy of education, that is, a positive conception of what education ought to be in the light of as much information about man, society, and the universe as he can muster from all available areas of experience and knowledge. This has been essentially the concern of educational thinkers such as Plato and Dewey. Contemporaneously, one question of such an order raised on the level of a United Nations Commission as well as in more restricted philosophic and educational circles, is that of whether or not there are any basic human rights that apply to all men as men and, if there are any such, what do these mean in terms of education? Is the right to education one such right? If so, what kind of education? It is not difficult to see that the first, what we called the analytic function, and the second, what we shall call the theoretical function, of educational philosophy are intimately related. One can hardly carry the critical function very far without developing critical norms nor can one carry out the theoretical function with any hope of relevance unless he relates it critically to existing educational systems and practices.

Each function, however, critical or theoretical, is apt to be truncated if the investigator is philosophically naive or if he lacks adequate background in the practices and sciences of education. If for no other reason than to avoid past blind alleys and to keep one's critical tools sharp the continuing conversation between educators and those in the general field of philosophy

via the educational philosopher or philosophical educator is of vital importance.

But if such cooperative endeavor is vital then why the seeming divorce between the two areas of philosophy and education we noted above? Is it apt to be permanent or is a reconciliation likely? A number of factors might be suggested in answer to the first question. High on the list would have to be placed the indifference of many persons in the field of philosophy to educational problems. Part of this indifference has been due to the intense concern in philosophical circles in the second quarter of this century with the problems of philosophy of science and linguistic analysis and has not been due to any basic antagonism to educational questions.

A second factor has been the dominance in educational circles of one major philosophic position which, not in terms of its founder or leading proponents in the field of education but in some educational quarters, has seemed on theoretical grounds to disparage the importance of theory in favor of an almost exclusive emphasis on practice.[5] This in practice has tended to give rise to what might be described as a naive empiricism which has forgotten its theoretical foundations and the fact that it is not self-evident or self-justifying. Still another factor in educational circles has been the rapid development of the sciences of education with a resulting preoccupation with these to the exclusion of seeing these sciences in the perspective of the total educational process, its aims and goals. This growth of the sciences of education, while temporarily shifting attention from theoretical questions, has and will continue to have a salutary effect on rethinking the foundations of education. If for no other reason, it will do so because of the tremendous increase in data which these sciences plus the social sciences in general have made available for the task, data which call for assimilation in educational theory.

One other deterrent to effective communication in the past and not wholly absent today has been the assumption on the part of some educators (not without some justification) and some philosophers (though few philosophers like to admit it) that once the philosopher has his foot in the door he will proceed to legislate what education must be from some privileged pinnacle. It must be admitted that some men in the field of philosophy have attempted to deduce philosophies of education with little regard for the demands of educational practice. But nothing less befits a person in the field of philosophy than intellectual pride. Two things must be said to the contrary: It is not the business of the philosopher to tell the educator or anyone else what he must do. There is a legitimate place for developing the educational implications of major philosophic positions. This is particularly desirable insofar as the philosophic positions themselves form part of the cultural context in which and for which education occurs. But even when the philosopher, educational or otherwise, is so engaged, his function is not dictation. Rather the function he may be able to perform is that of opening up new vistas and suggesting aspects of experience that may previously have been overlooked or underestimated. This is exactly the kind of a task in relation to education that John Dewey, for example, helped to perform. But a philosopher who under such circumstances failed

[5] An instance to the contrary that advances the role of unifying theory in the education of the teacher is: Theodore Brameld, *Cultural Foundations of Education*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1957, Chapter XIII, "The Study of Culture in Teacher Education," with particular reference to pp. 269–273.

to work closely with the professional educator or who did not grasp the practical problems of education would undermine the relevancy and the effectiveness of his work.

But far more basically the philosopher may serve as a resources person: one who can in cooperation with the educator bring the methodology and alternatives of philosophic investigation to bear upon common educational-philosophic problems. One might put the matter another way: The educator, whether he realizes it or not is, as we have suggested earlier, inevitably involved on a day to day basis with philosophic problems and issues. To perform his educational task as effectively as possible, he needs enough philosophic sophistication to recognize the problems for what they are in their historical context and the alternatives available. Here the philosopher may be of direct aid in the common task of helping human beings become as fully aware as possible of what is involved in evaluating the direction of their experiences with a view to the fullest and most worthwhile life possible.

Fundamentally, the contention of the authors is not that those who are called professional philosophers ought to be called in on every educational problem. This would be nonsense. Rather our contention is threefold: (1) that the lines of communication be kept open for the mutual enrichment of both areas, (2) that those persons who specialize in the field of philosophy of education have the opportunity to develop competence in philosophy commensurate with their competence in education or vice versa, and (3) that all persons who intend to teach should have some acquaintance with the aims, presuppositions, and alternatives in educational theory through work in philosophy of education offered by persons competent in both fields.

Turning to the second question: "Is the divorce between philosophy and education apt to be permanent?" the answer would seem to be an encouraging "No." A number of things point to increasing reconciliation and recognition of the mutual involvement in common problems in both educational and philosophic circles. As early as 1942 the National Society for the Study of Education devoted the first part of its *Forty-first Yearbook* to philosophies of education.[5] A more expanded and inclusive treatment appeared in the Society's *Fifty-fourth Yearbook* in 1955.[6] In 1950, *Educational Theory* as the organ of the growing Philosophy of Education Society, along with the John Dewey Society and the College of Education of the University of Illinois began publication. The Symposium on Philosophy of Education at the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association in 1955 (noted above) participated in by Professor Harry Broudy and Professor Kingsley Price was followed up by the spring issue, 1956, of the *Harvard Educational Review*, devoted wholly to comments on the symposium papers by an extensive list of philosophers, educational philosophers, and educators.[7] Another symposium on value theory in education

[5] Nelson B. Henry (ed.), *The Forty-First Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, Philosophies of Education*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942.

[6] Nelson B. Henry (ed.), *The Fifty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, Modern Philosophies of Education.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955.

[7] The original symposium papers were published in *The Journal of Philosophy*, 52 (1955), pp. 612–633. Harry S. Broudy's paper was entitled "How Philosophical Can Philosophy of Education Be?" (612–621) and Kingsley Price's paper was entitled "Is a Philosophy of Education Necessary?" (622–633).

is scheduled for the 1958 Meeting of the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association. The number of articles dealing with philosophy of education both in education and philosophic journals has noticeably increased in the last eight years as has the number of important new books. As cases in point on the preparatory level, advanced degree programs in social foundations and philosophy of education with greater emphasis on philosophic adequacy have been developed and continued at the University of Illinois, New York University, and Columbia. The development at Boston University of the first joint program for a Ph.D. in philosophy of education by a school of education and a graduate department of philosophy has stimulated much inquiry from other institutions. These are only sample cases of the renewed interest and growing communication between fields.

In a period of shifting values, of national and international cultural crises such as our own, the educational philosopher stands in a peculiarly responsible and sensitive spot, for his task is the articulation and development of the aims and presuppositions of the educational processes. To a remarkable degree failure to keep educational philosophy vital and to translate it into educational process can mean the demise of a culture itself. Accordingly the educational philosopher not only needs every encouragement but the active cooperation of all the disciplines, philosophic and scientific, that bear upon his task.

Chapter III

THE DICHOTOMY BETWEEN ENDS AND MEANS IN AMERICAN EDUCATION

The relationship between ends and means can be clearly seen in the work of a good carpenter. In order to build a functional piece of furniture the carpenter must establish a clearly defined relationship between the end in mind and the kinds of tools and skills needed to produce it. And so it is with education. Deliberate, purposeful education is impossible unless there is a clearcut relationship between ends in education and the means by which these ends are to be obtained. The process of evaluation tests this relationship. Perhaps the greatest problem that exists for education today is the dichotomy that exists between ends and means, between goals which students should strive for and the methods of instruction by which these goals shall be obtained. In another sense this dichotomy concerns the lack of relationship between theory of education and practice, and *vice versa*.

When ends are separated from means, and theory is separated from practice, misdirection results.[1] Unless ends imply means, unless theory implies practice, then there remains merely abstraction. Part of the stigma attached to "egg-heads" is their alleged inability to be realistic, "to get out of the clouds." Theorizers become impatient at the apparent unwillingness of others to implement their theories and they in turn are accused of being "too theoretical," of spinning theories that will not work, or of not considering practice implied by theory, means implied by ends. Professors of professional education are often accused of being too disposed to expound upon what the proper function of the pupil, parent, teacher, and curriculum should be without regard to the means for their fulfillment.

When means become separated from ends, and practice from theory, then too often the means becomes ends in themselves and practice exists for its own sake undirected by theory. Methods of teaching may then become mechanistic and habitual. Another persistent criticism of professional educators is that they concentrate too much on techniques, and on methods of teaching. Even the term "teacher training" implies a low-level development of habits to be learned in teaching. When goals of education do not direct methods then one is likely to find the following:

a. Teachers adjusting their instruction to fit the material on tests.

b. The over-emphasis on audio-visual aids, on building programs, on assembly programs.

c. Stress placed on statistics courses as an end.

d. Preoccupation on the part of a student to pass a course or to graduate.

e. Over-emphasis on grades, prizes, competitions, football.

f. Emphasis on facts divorced from meaning, emphasis on courses unrelated to life.

[1] It is not implied here that ends-means, theory-practice are of the same order.

g. The respect accorded an administrator who "gets things done" irrespective of what he gets done.

h. An administrator's primary concern for having a smoothly-run school.

The consequences of separating ends from means in classroom teaching are serious, for in effect a teacher is actually confronted with the task of producing purposeless learning. If goals are not inherent in the subject matter, if students are unable to perceive the end for which their studying is the means, then the teacher may resort to one of two alternatives. The teacher may use coercion and punishment and by creating an artificial end, that of avoiding punishment, get the students to employ the desired means. Or the teacher may sugar-coat learning by introducing incidental and irrelevant "fun" techniques which also provide an artificial end to get students to employ desired means.

Perhaps the clearest measure of the extent to which ends and means are separated in a school is the drop-out rate. If students are unable to perceive a worthwhile end to stay in schools then they will drop out at the legal age. In all probability the problems of school discipline and juvenile delinquency directly relate to the breakdown of ends and means in the perception of young people.

The goals of schools are the goals of society, and if the society has difficulty in establishing clear goals for itself then this confusion will be reflected in the schools. After all, people have goals, not schools in themselves, and people encourage their goals to be the schools'. By and large, the most persistent and pressing goals of life have been removed or at least weakened in the United States today. The satisfaction of basic wants, of food, shelter, clothing, health, no longer occupy man's full time. New goals of life to replace those discarded have not emerged with clarity.[2] Nowhere is the aimlessness of American life more clearly perceived than from the vantage point of an undeveloped foreign country where, amidst poverty, sickness, starvation and illiteracy, the goals of life as well as schools are clearly evident. In such a country, ends and means in education are readily related. Not so in a society in transition. Social scientists, with persistence, are searching after better means for ascertaining these goals in a climate of cultural change. These same insistent people are working on the very methods which can hasten or influence cultural change.[3]

The increasing complexity of society in an age of technology has forced man to specialize to a greater extent. The specialization in industry has its counterpart in education where training is now provided for many specialized school services. Specialization leads to the fragmentation of experience, thus making it more and more difficult for man to perceive aims outside his specialized field. Forced to deal with a narrow aspect of education, the specialist tends to find ends within his own area. The reading expert, the guidance director, the public relations specialist, and even teachers of subject matter too intensively trained in one narrow specialty,

[2] An analysis of this observation of American life is made by David Riesman, "Abundance for What?" *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 14 (1958), pp. 135–139.

[3] A further illustration of this imbalance can be found in: Galbraith, John Kenneth, *The Affluent Society*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1958, pp. 251–269, Chapter XVIII, "The Theory of Social Balance."

are prone to do this. The American school needs to assimilate these findings in the improvement of means used and the ends desired.

Crowded classrooms, limited facilities, and over-crowded schedules increase the likelihood of the separation of ends and means. Because of preoccupation with more students in limited facilities, the confinement that results produces a lack of freedom among teachers to look beyond their own sphere of influence and look for ends beyond their own narrow jurisdiction. Burdened with many students, paper work, and crowded schedules, teachers tend to seek day to day ends which, under better conditions, should actually be means toward long-term goals.

The authoritarian organization of many schools works to create a dualism between theory and practice, ends and means. If it is the policy of the school for the teachers to teach and for the administrator to administer, then the dichotomy has been officially legislated. Unless teachers are freed to discuss aims, to evaluate programs, to discover whether or not the aims of the school are being achieved in their classes, to theorize about practice, then there is little hope of establishing a good relationship between theory and practice, ends and means. A person is simply a functionary, an instrument, to the extent that he does not have within his power the ability to create the balance between ends and means or to implement methods intelligently when these methods are directed by good aims. To the extent that the goals of the school and the evaluation process is in the hands of the administrator only, to that extent teachers are simply functionaries. They are means to the administrators' ends.

Chapter IV

EVALUATION AS A KEY PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENDS AND MEANS

Nowhere is the false means-ends dichotomy more visible than in the field of educational measurement and evaluation. Here the test-maker can never be an independent operative. Always he is destined to work under a two-way dependency:

1. Before he can build his instruments, measures, and techniques, he must first ascertain with the help of others what it is he is to measure. This is a question of goals, objectives, and values.

2. After he gathers his data, using the most reliable and valid instruments which can be devised, the test-maker must seek to interpret the meaning and implications of his findings. In this way the test-maker needs to rely on the educational philosopher or the philosophical methods at the outset of the measurement and evaluation process and at the conclusion of the measurement and evaluation procedure. Each of these phases will be discussed separately.

What goals should the schools aim to achieve with their clientele? What kinds of persons do we want now and in the foreseeable future? These are not questions within the sole jurisdiction of those concerned with intricate and statistical processes of test construction and test refinement; this is a concern of all the community members — lay and professional, young and old, philosopher and statistical empiricist. The test-maker cannot begin to develop or refine any appraisal methodology until he receives through school-community consensus a specification of goals of education at a given grade level and in a delimited area of experiencing. It is not the function of the evaluator to establish goals. It is the function of the test-maker to develop the best techniques to measure agreed-upon goals which have been set up by the community through the participatory processes of group thinking, which in turn, represents essentially the philosophical dependency. In a manner of speaking, the test-constructor might keep in communication with the decisions of the philosopher concerning what values are to be represented as desired goals. After this decision has been made, only then is the test-maker able to decide what test forms to employ and to refine his measures through the classical methodology of item writing, item analysis, validation and reliability checks.

Furthermore, these goals which might well be agreed upon through the philosophical processes should be stated whenever possible as desired and expected behavior modifications. Learning should be defined in terms of behavioral changes. In this way the school may better guide the learning experiences of the young so as to produce a maturing adult who elects to read the better literature, who makes better use of his leisure time, who becomes a more effective employee, who plays the role of a good parent and citizen, who thinks critically and creatively (thinking is internal behavior), and who drives carefully so as to safeguard his own life as well as the lives of others. Unless these objectives of the school are stated in terms of specific and expected behavior outcomes and evaluated accordingly, the school agency may suffer the tragedy of irrelevancy.

The need for stating school objectives in terms of behavior outcomes has

important implications both for the test-maker as well as for the educational philosopher. To appraise and to measure school outcomes viewed in terms of behavioral objectives will call for preferential use of evaluation techniques as contrasted with paper and pencil tests. This will mean greater dependency on such techniques as interviews, questionnaires, anecdotal records, sociometric devices, personal writing, observation methodology, check lists, rating scales, in contrast to paper and pencil tests in which an objective key enables efficient and handy scoring. In sharp contrast, all these evaluation methods will place a premium on the making of value judgments which represent essentially the philosophical orientation.

At the conclusion of either the more precise use of tests or the more subjective use of evaluation tools, there will always be the need to interpret findings — essentially a subjective process. In order to do this, something in addition to the test data or norms are needed. For example, they need to be studied against all the available information on the child. This will include his home and family background, his prior schooling, his physical well-being, his mental and emotional status, and his school and classroom setting. This process of test interpretation through which meaning and insight is gained at the conclusion of the measurement process reveals a final dependency upon the philosophical methodology.

As it was in the beginning, so must it be at the end of the testing or evaluation process. The test-maker's craft should involve (1) the taking of agreed-upon objectives which might be suggested, in part at least, through the thinking of educational philosophy; and (2) the constructing of the most promising devices for testing the extent to which those objectives have been determined. In such manner might the work of the test-maker and that of the educational philosopher be concrete parts of one task, and not independent of each other. In the case of the teacher this means that he always plays these two roles in his classroom operation.

Since the alpha and the omega of the measurement and evaluation process involves the educational philosopher, and since the methodological construction processes demand highly skilled and specialized services of the test-maker, it is incumbent that these aspects of the means-ends dichotomy need to be joined together into a single continuum of cooperative and mutual endeavor of both the educational philosopher and the test-maker. Otherwise, the test-maker may measure insignificant or even irrelevant objectives, and the philosopher may utilize invalid or unreliable techniques to appraise significant and vital objectives of the educational process. Nowhere is there a greater need for dependency than between the test-maker and the educational philosopher.

The substantive concern dealt with here has further implications for ends-and-means and theory-and-practice. The relationships can be seen in the following expressions.

Only when ends and means or theory and practice are considered together can each influence the other in a truly interactive relationship. This suggests that there should be a much closer contact between policy-making and theorizing on the one hand, and the determination of practice and technique on the other. In this relationship the former provides the latter with direction; the latter provides the former with judgment as to practicability of goals and theory.

In the field of education there seem to be two general approaches for

creating this balance. In the first place there could exist far more effective channels of communication between persons closely associated with theory and persons closely associated with practice. The present organization of schools and colleges is not conducive to this kind of communication. The influx of students, the increase in course offerings, and inadequate buildings make for more centralization and specialization with the consequent decrease in opportunities for communication. Attempts to establish this communication, however, are being made and these attempts have taken several forms:

a. A greater emphasis upon staff meetings, staff conferences, and workshops where ends-and-means, theory-and-practice, are continually studied and tested by persons from different areas of work.

b. The practice, especially at the college level, of joint seminars where several instructors representing different disciplines, as well as different degrees of involvement in theory and practice, teach a class jointly.

c. The widespread practice of inviting outside consultants to provide insights into better practice and theory.

The second general approach to re-establishing a closer relationship is to assign to individuals areas of responsibility which include the formulation of ends *and* means, theory *and* practice, in their work. Instead of bringing together the technician and the philosopher, the emphasis is placed upon the individual himself learning the role of both. Attempts to do this have taken several forms:

a. The encouragement of students to analyze, to hypothesize, and to evaluate ideas in action.

b. An emphasis on working out a functional general education as opposed to an emphasis upon special or vocational education merely.

c. The widespread practice of encouraging in-service education and summer courses for the purpose of broadening experience as opposed to more specialization solely.

d. College practicums or seminars where in a block of time, theory and practice can be studied in unity.

e. The shift in the teacher's role from that of supplying the end of learning and the pupil the means, to the teacher guiding the student to work out an ends-means relationship himself.

f. Greater emphasis in teacher education upon the study of underlying disciplines and the opportunity to test theory in school practice.

g. The use of inter-disciplinary faculty committees to advise on policy and practice.

In summary, the relationship between ends and means, theory and practice, can be established only when each reflects and enriches the other. This can be done by specialists working together or by the deliberate education and subsequent freeing of educators to be both practitioner and philosopher, technician and theorizer.

Chapter V

PARTICIPATION AS A PURPOSE IN EDUCATION

Ralph Barton Perry has called inheritance, participation, and contribution the three basic purposes of education.[1] It has been suggested that these purposes might be used as one point of departure for discussing the role of the educational philosopher. In what follows, the main intent shall be to focus attention on one of the basic purposes — participation — in discussing that role.

Participation as a purpose of education may be conceived as coming to realization whenever certain elements that are inherited are used in an attempt to contribute something in the educational process. What is meant here is rather obvious: an alleged educational process is genuinely educative in so far as all three of the basic purposes of education are seen hopefully as functioning elements of a single unity, and not as independent, discrete purposes to be achieved each for its own sake alone.

However commonplace the recognition of the value of such a unity may be, its significance is made meaningful far too seldom in practice. When unity is lacking, the ideas, institutions, and other elements which constitute a society's inheritance stand forth, not as possible data to be used to gain insight into present problems, but as a part of a past which is no longer, save as a kind of lifeless residue which has scarcely any meaning for either a past or a present society. In such a meaningless situation, what passes for participation then becomes a kind of artificial manipulating of what has filtered in from the past, an aimless dabbling in the course of events, with no real control over eventualities. Any contribution which comes then is more a result of accident, or whatever the sheer logic of unintelligently guided processes shall determine, than of a meaningful process in which the three alleged purposes genuinely function as purposes. For what a meaningful process consists in — *i.e.*, a process in which meanings are brought about — is the literal *taking* of one's inheritance and *meaning* to do something with it. Put differently, one participates intelligently in his society's inheritance whenever he uses it purposefully to contribute something which hopefully is to be a portion of a later society's inheritance.

What is not so obvious, and which is of serious consequence in educational practice, is the fact that to fail to realize a unity among the three purposes of education is, at the same time, to fail to realize their individual worth. There is a quality about the activities in which one engages in the working out of each of the purposes, a quality which can be had for its own sake alone, and which is of immediate worth. But even the worth of this kind of quality will ultimately dissolve if its potentiality for securing future qualities is not tried out. It is only in the *taking* of ideas, institutions, writings, or whatever, which constitute a society's inheritance, and *intending* to do something with them, that their immediate worth is brought to bear in the seeking of further values, which may be sought both for their own sake, and for what they may become. Likewise with participation: if it be seen as an activity for its own sake merely, a fuller sense of participation is missed, *viz.*, that sense in which participation is a meaningful

[1] Ralph B. Perry, *Realms of Value*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1954, p. 411.

activity in which contributions are sought. And so with contribution: its meaning as a purpose is something more than having and enjoying that which has been produced. This something more can be anticipated by an attempt to construct plans of action for using present contributions (including those even now in process) in future situations, in order that the present's contributions will be the future's inheritance.

In brief, whether the purpose of education be inheritance, participation, or contribution, each purpose must be conceived in two senses — first, as that which it is in itself, and second, for what it may become — if its potentiality *as* purpose is to be nearly realized. What is more, in order to effect such a conception, an educational process is required in which the triad of purposes is of a single reality.

Indeed, one could build a case around the claim that the failure to recognize in theory and to attempt to work out in practice such a unity of a triad of purposes has been one of the most significant problems in the history of the school as a special institution in the educational process. The question has arisen as to the kinds of problems which an educational philosopher might well consider with respect to participation as a purpose of education, while keeping in mind the place of that purpose in the functioning reality of which it ought to be an inseparable element. In this discussion, participation as a purpose is to be separated from that reality in thought merely, but not in actual practice.

The problem of how to achieve genuine participation may be pursued with an eye to viewing its functioning in the school as a miniature version of the process of participation which is writ large in the society of which the school is a specialized institution. Viewed in this manner, the problem becomes one of furthering the democratic way of life. and adding to its meaning as that way of life is lived. To participate genuinely in the democratic way of life, then, society's individuals must actively take part in the sense that they literally take elements which are inherited and attempt to work out meanings with them. In this sense, participation is not a mere using of that which is inherited for its own sake, but is using it to contribute further meanings. Indeed, new meanings can be provided only insofar as further action is taken on what is inherited. Genuine active participation is a process of making over the "products of the past"; therefore, the question as to whether the democratic way of life ought to be a static or a dynamic process is answered when one recognizes the dynamic characteristics of genuine participation in that way of life.

To participate in the contribution of meanings in the democratic process, each individual's own self ought to be in process of formation, because the self is a product of social action, not that which is inherent in the very nature of things. Any concept of a social order which does not include an attempt to account for the growth of selves is devoid of meaning for a democratic way of life. The plea for the recognition of two kinds of values in the activities which attempt to work out the purposes of education is reflected in the possibilities in each individual self as well.

In so far as the individual is recognized, not for what he is merely, but also for what he may become, the oft-repeated phrase "the worth of each individual" may come to have meaning. In the way of thinking of some, it seems almost inconceivable that certain individuals have any kind of value "as they are" in their own right. But neither a closing of the minds to such cases nor a merely charitable attitude will do away with their

existence. The brute facts show us that they really *are*, and that they are *real*. The serious problem still remains: how they are to become genuine participants in the society of which they are a part; how they can become conscious of worthwhile aims and seek the means to work them out. The shortcoming is sometimes, but not always, a lack of aims and the means to achieve them; quite often, however, certain aims are quite conspicuous, but they are detrimental to the greatest good of the greatest number. The plea here is not for an individualism, but for an effort to find out the most meaningful social process in which individuality can grow and produce greater individuals of a greater society. It cannot be denied that all individuals are used in some sense or other; but therein the sadness lies, for one kind of using involves a non-conscious participation, in which the individual is in, but not genuinely of the process that is going on (except in the sense that one can be of a process without directing it in any way). To fail to respect the individual, both for what he is and for what he may become, often leads in practice to consequences implied by the phraseology "he was used," in its most invidious sense.

Due to the increasing complexities of society, many would say that it is well-nigh impossible, a fool's dream, to suppose that all individuals in a society can participate in a meaningful manner, in the sense of meaning intended here. The state of a society in which integration seems impossible because of the conflicting interest groups which appeal to an individual, so that he is torn among several loyalties, appears to "tear apart" the individual if he attempts to choose rationally among such choices. At the same time, there is the possibility of a "brave new world" in which the danger seems to be not that of disintegration because of conflict in ideals, but of thought control by means so subtle and thorough as to ensnare even the most thoughtful individuals. Participation, in the sense urged here may indeed be an impossible ideal. Yet it can be argued that participation in this sense has not been given a fair trial. To dismiss it as an impossibility without trying it out is to admit failure of a kind. It is the kind of failure which comes from a refusal to translate ideas into working-hypotheses which can be tried out in practice. Ideas are not true or false in themselves; they have no logic which can be finally determined by inspection alone. Instead, the very logic of a process which would attempt to make participation meaningful as a purpose of education demands trial in the actual democratic process, of which the educational processes in the schools are special cases. It is in the latter that attempts at participation may be tried out, in the hope that a way of action will develop in young minds which will continue to function in the day-by-day activities writ large in the society itself.

The task of the educational philosopher in such attempts can be seen, in one sense, as a modest one. It is not to work out plans which, if realized, might finally "solve" the problem of the individual coming to realize himself in a social process. A problem such as this one is not solved so simply. Yet it is his hope that he can participate in the production of participating members of his society. Perhaps his best opportunity for this work lies in his contacts with prospective teachers whom he meets in his classes. If he can become a kind of professional gadfly, urging his students to ask themselves and others questions about the educational process which need to be resolved in every generation, he may take part in making others see that there are genuine problems which deserve the attention of those who

are in any way connected with the schools. Problems about the nature of subject matter and methods, the essentials of the educational process, and intellectual versus practical subjects, may appear to some as too well-worn in the educational literature to bear repeating. And indeed, they are, in the merely formal way in which they are sometimes presented. The problem then is to make the asking of such questions come to life in situations in which prospective teachers will find themselves. If the educational philosopher can do this, his modest but difficult task may prove a worthwhile one.

It seems well to mention briefly the kind of questions which deserve serious consideration. The problem of subject matter and methods has often been viewed as a problem of setting apart certain contents to be studied, and then seeking methods to be applied to them, much as one cuts cloth according to a pattern which is laid over it. The problem as viewed in this manner is one which indeed has worn far too well, and needs to be repatterned. Instead, it can be taken as a live question as to the nature of a reality in which what constitutes subject matter and methods is seen as one whole, and then the question of *determining* this reality, rather than fitting its discreet elements into a pre-arranged pattern, comes to focus. If the problem of essentials be seen, not as whether essentials must be included in the curriculum, but as a question of *finding* what is essential, curriculum problems might come to life for the prospective teacher. And if the problem of intellectual and practical kinds of subject matter be cast as one of determining how any endeavor of men can become genuinely intellectual, whether or no those endeavors have generally been recognized as the kinds of tasks by which some men gain their livelihood, instead of asking merely how much of what kinds of subject matters should be offered, then the possibility of finding humane concerns in all sorts of men's endeavors is open to investigation. These problems mentioned are but a sample of the ones which are within the province of educational philosophy's critical eye. Whatever the sample taken, the concern which may be nurtured is that of seeking to contribute in the participating process, rather than assuming that participation is merely manipulation of prior contributions.

What is being urged at this point is a kind of humility in the face of present knowledge with respect to problems of the educational process. The condition of knowledge is such that less can be made of it for setting the educational process in certain directions than some individuals would have us believe. The results of inquiry, however rigorously worked out, which represent the knowledge at hand about the educational process, do not in themselves constitute the ends to be sought. No specific content of knowledge as such represents a worthwhile goal. By using such knowledge, such a goal may be anticipated and striven for when that knowledge is taken for a purpose. The task for the educational philosopher as seen here is that of making prospective teachers sensitive to the unfinality of knowledge, particularly of the knowledge now at hand about specific problems of the educational process. And it is sheer folly to suppose that fixed answers can now be had about such problems or that they can be found by choosing among several alternative answers now at hand. There is a great need for planning, but this is not to suppose that any curriculum plan now used will necessarily suffice in any or all particular educational situations. The nature of any plan does not guarantee its functioning

in any particular situation. To realize this is to understand that in the ordinary contacts of pupil with teacher, such problems as subject matter and method must be worked out in a way which can be aided but not assured by any single plan. In such contacts, plans may serve as scaffolding upon which to work at the problem, but such scaffolding must be added to and finally torn down as the building progresses; and even the "same" scaffolding used in a different situation has a kind of uniqueness about it. Forms may be functional, but one ought take care not to mistake that which is constructed and set forth as form after the functioning process for the very functioning in which that form had taken shape.

To participate in the educational process calls for a kind of activity in which not only the answers to questions which are asked in any present, but questions not now asked, are coming into existence. To participate, then, is not to seek answers merely, but is to seek the very questions themselves which may someday be asked. It can be hoped that all members of a society will have and take advantage of the opportunity to realize their own selves. Such a hope will be realized, if at all, only if efforts are made to make meaningful the purpose of participation in the educational process. If educational philosophers can, by their efforts, do even this little: to help make teachers sensitive to the unfinished character of knowledge so that this sensitivity may in turn be reflected in developing young minds, then their once-modest task may ultimately show signs of life among the practical affairs of men, wherein all theories must ultimately come forth to be tested.

Chapter VI

THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHER AS "LIAISON OFFICER"

The stereotype of the philosopher, including the educational philosopher, is one of the reasons why he is utilized less effectively in professional as well as lay activities than he ought to be.

We are all aware of typical features of the stereotype: an aloof, somewhat absent-minded creature absorbed in abstractions and obsessed by ivory-tower speculations that have little if anything to do with the really vital affairs of "every-day life" and even less with "common sense."

It must be granted that, like other stereotypes, this one is not altogether false. Philosophers do frequently seem remote, and the standard college courses offered in their field may on occasion reinforce that reputation. In the United States, the recent preoccupation of many professional philosophers with symbolic logic and other erudite competencies removed from the great moral and political struggles of our time has scarcely served to weaken the stereotype.

And yet, as anyone knows who has studied the history of philosophy, some of the greatest thinkers from Plato onward have also been men of action — men profoundly immersed in the fighting issues of life. Even in our own day one thinks of Bertrand Russell, John Dewey, Benedetto Croce, Thomas G. Masaryk, and Albert Schweitzer.

While the philosopher of education can hardly hope to approximate these world figures, nevertheless, precisely because he has chosen to apply fundamental theory to the eminently practical field of education, one would expect him to be eager to bring his training and experience to bear in as many concrete ways as possible. That he has not always done so is probably his own fault as well as that of his associates: his own, because he, too, sometimes escapes into "theory for the sake of theory"; his associates', because sometimes they show little interest in discovering what the educational philosopher might offer to the enrichment of other fields within the scope of teacher education.

Perhaps it would be helpful to consider a few of the ways in which such enrichment might occur. Of a number that might be selected, let us consider four: (1) the philosopher of education as resource person in other areas of specialization; (2) the philosopher of education as interdisciplinarian; (3) the philosopher of education as co-researcher; and (4) the philosopher of education as policy shaper.

(1) No subject matter in teacher education, or for that matter in anything else, is devoid of its own philosophic aspects. We are thinking here primarily of one important feature of philosophy — its critical concern with the nature of assumptions, presuppositions, and premises. For no educational authority in any subject matter is able to proceed without these starting-points even when, as is often the case, they are not consciously inspected by that authority.

To suggest, then, that the philosopher of education serve as a "resource person" in other fields than his own — in curriculum, administration, learning, measurement, or any one of a dozen others — is first of all to suggest that he be utilized to sensitize students and instructors to what Harold Laski aptly called their "inarticulate major premises." The value

of this contribution should be obvious: it helps to create awareness that the strength of, say, an explicit curriculum superstructure is only as great as its implicit foundations — foundations which, if one takes the trouble to examine them, may prove to be flimsy indeed.

To put the point in another way, the potential contributions of the educational philosopher as resource person are epitomized in his obligation *not* to take for granted what other people often do take for granted. We are not saying that he functions merely as a skeptic; he may thus function, certainly, but he may also wish to examine educational starting-points not to demolish but to strengthen them by greater discernment of their meaning. Nor are we saying that the resource role is limited solely to critical analysis of these starting-points: there are other contributions, too, which will often emerge in the process of making the first — contributions perhaps better described in terms of the three remaining liaison roles.

(2) In speaking of the philosopher of education as "interdisciplinarian," the implication is that he is, or surely ought to be, concerned not only with the relations of all educational fields to one another but, in turn, with the relations of these to the still wider spheres of art, science, religion, politics — in short, to the world. Here his service could be the invaluable one of providing perspective — of helping his associates more clearly to perceive the significance of their particular specializations to other specializations and to the still wider contexts of culture and nature.

To deny the need of this service today would be foolhardy. At least as much as any institution, education has suffered because is has not maintained adequate perspective. It has not viewed itself from a distance, as it were, so that when a crisis occurs (as in the recent alarm created by the sputnik) it is unprepared to do much more than go on the defensive with loud and unintelligible noises.

More concretely, the educational philosopher should be called upon to join forces with experts in a variety of fields besides his own — and to work cooperatively in the study of problems that, by their nature, cannot be solved by any one of these experts. The interdisciplinary approach to, say, problems of personality is today becoming more and more recognized as essential — a fact exemplified by the increasingly popular term "behavioral sciences" to encompass all the disciplines from psychology and psychiatry to economics and anthropology that deal with human experience. In education, the crucial importance of the behavioral sciences goes without saying, though interdisciplinary approaches in teacher-training programs are still more the exception than the rule. Even fewer, however, are those programs that include the educational philosopher in cross-departmental courses, should any exist. Yet he, more than anyone else, should be equipped by his training to throw light upon relational dimensions of the problems under consideration, to press for warranted integrations, and to keep the entire effort in cultural as well as educational perspective.

(3) "Co-researcher" — the third of the four liaison roles — overlaps with the second. For when the philosopher participates in fundamental educational research with his associates he again performs an interdisciplinary function. Here, however, we are thinking less of courses of study than of field and laboratory investigation and experiments.

In education, as much as any profession, research is constantly carried

on that involves, for example, attitudes and beliefs about a vast range of germane issues — from sexual morality, at one extreme, to international relations, at another. The philosopher's contribution is, of course, to make sure that the most significant attitudes and beliefs are focused upon — a task also related to his special concern with assumptions and other starting-points. Thus, as such a co-researcher he could share more often in the formulation of questionnaires and other instruments of investigation. He could, were he invited to do so, participate directly in field work in order to offer guidance and to learn first-hand. Similarly, in the case of doctoral and other studies confined chiefly to library resources, he could demonstrate his usefulness by counseling candidates in methods of research practised by philosophers themselves — research in the history of concepts, in evaluation, and many other areas.

Teacher-training institutions need to carry on many more community-and-school experiments to test out fresh ideas — pilot projects that could, if successful, develop into accepted practices. In these endeavors, the educational philosopher should be an ally: thus he should help to formulate hypotheses in the most fruitful ways possible and to suggest avenues of exploration that might not occur to colleagues with other kinds of background.

(4) The role of "policy shaper" has also been anticipated. For, to help in shaping policies for professional education is to perform all three previous roles as well. It is, first, to serve as a resource person especially aware of the assumptions and premises that govern, for example, the requirements for a degree. It is, second, to encourage awareness of the interrelations of departments, courses, and contents, and hence to press for less "atomism," more "organism," in the total program. And it is, third, to stimulate kinds of student and faculty research that may be less pedestrian, less piecemeal, more audacious, and more comprehensive in its preoccupation with educational problems on the cutting-edges of society and school.

More than all this, however, the educational philosopher should be involved at every stage in the effort to formulate and translate into practice new designs for education itself. Thus, in addition to his roles as critic of premises and as synthesizer of disparate parts, he is rightly interested in norms — which is to say, with what ought to be but is not yet. In this responsibility we are, of course, calling attention to what some of his peers think is the only legitimate interest of the educational philosopher — namely, the realm of values. This view is as naive as it is constricting. But certainly one of his interests — a major one, too — is to analyze and validate as far as possible the purposes of education and hence the values which constitute the substance of all purposes.

In teacher education itself, these purposes are being subjected to renewed scrutiny, and the question of whether the principles that have governed its programs are defensible is now of uncomfortable urgency. The philosopher of education should be directly involved in every attempt to clarify and crystallize educational policies commensurate with the revolutionary age in which we live. He should eagerly serve on key committees devoted in any way to this paramount objective. And he should bring to bear upon their deliberations the best available knowledge from the branch of philosophy most concerned with values — the field of axiology.

To suggest that the educational philosopher serve by these means as "liaison officer" is simply a way of saying that he desires to make philosophy count. It is not to suggest the slightest lessening of tough, thorough study of the field itself. Nor is it to suggest any radical departure from what the philosopher has always tried to do when he has been an influential force. His role as resource critic of assumptions has a tradition behind it of more than two millenia — that of the Socratic "gadfly." His roles as interdisciplinarian and co-researcher are, in last analysis, those of the maker of *weltanschauungen* — of steady and harmonious views of the world. Lastly, his role as policy shaper is that of creative visionary — of suggester and projector toward better ways of performing necessary educational tasks.

All of these roles, however, require for their performance a new rapprochement from two sides — from that of the educational philosopher, and from that of colleagues who can no more afford to isolate him from the mainstream of their endeavors than he can afford to isolate himself.

Chapter VII

SOME CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS

A problem which ought to be of great concern to the educational philosopher, and one which seems especially pressing in these times of searching examination of the nation's schools, is that of reaching the minds of the populace with discussions of problems which concern it. As has been intimated in the introduction, there is a considerable gap between the kinds of problems which the great bulk of the populace think about and those of educational philosophers. And in one sense, this is as it should be: there are some kinds of questions (such as technical ones about metaphysics, epistemology, value theories) which belong in the realm of competence of the educational philosopher, and which farmers, businessmen, classroom teachers, laborers, and others would properly find outside their area of discourse. In a different sense, however, the mass of the populace deserves to know that there are attempts being made in the realm of theory to discuss problems of the educational process; and, further, that theory needs to be translated into terms of a kind which might enable the mass of the populace to gain some sense of the issues at hand.

There seems to be little doubt but that what C. Wright Mills has called "the mass media of distraction" have to a frightening extent tended to distract the public from the main issues, in the realm of education as elsewhere. It is known that in some instances certain journals have explicitly refused to publish alternative viewpoints in the present controversies about education, on the grounds that such discussion is not what their readers want. Refusals in that manner indicate that propaganda, in its worst sense, is being spread by certain strong interest groups. In addition to such conscious attempts at distraction, there are no doubt well-meaning attempts by various media which are also distracting, even if unintentionally so. But one can still believe that the having of good intentions alone does not constitute an intelligent study of anything.

However, in addition to the difficulties which educational philosophers actually face in contributing to the mass media, there is a further problem which needs to be confronted with respect to the enhancing of communication between the ivory tower and more mundane affairs. How, in fact, can the educational philosopher translate his special concerns to the man in the street, so that they will be meaningful? If mass media are used by educational philosophers, will communication actually take place? Baldly stated, how can an educational philosopher make sense to a plumber, a farmer, a laborer, a housewife, or to any others who might ask, "What is your reason for existing? What good are you to us?" When one considers seriously how difficult it is for an educational philosopher to make meaningful, even to his own classes of prospective teachers, the problems in educational theory which he discusses, there is little wonder that he finds difficulty in talking sense to the less-formally educated populace. Yet the emotionally-toned appeals of the mass media represent a serious challenge to serious thinking about problems of the schools, which problems deserve the attention of the population. In what ways can the educational philosopher reach the minds of that population, while maintaining his professional competence and at the same time refusing to use the kinds of

tactics and strategy which result in unintelligent emotionalism? Or may ways be found to use such tactics and strategy to produce something more desirable than unintelligent emotionalism?

The assumption which is made here obviously is that the educational philosopher ought to attempt to bridge the gap between his "purely philosophical" discussions and the realm of more widespread endeavors wherein those discussions must ultimately become effective. In his contacts with prospective teachers, he is engaged in a long-range plan to make theory become effective in practice: to the extent that teachers try out educational theories in their teaching, and insofar as such theories direct the minds of students for action in their everyday lives, discussions of educational philosophers may make a difference in things in the long run. But, in the meantime, what of the short run? The claim here is that there is a need for more immediate and more direct efforts at reaching the common man with serious discussion about the kinds of problems with which educational philosophers are concerned.

What is more, it seems worthwhile to suggest that the flow of influence might not all be in one direction. Educational philosophers might well consider the possibility of their learning something from the common man, as well as their "teaching" him about what it is that they are doing. It would seem that a lack of understanding of the various concerns of the common man on the part of educational philosophers is a serious obstacle to communication, as is the lack of understanding in the reverse direction. Educational philosophers communicate with each other (to a somewhat limited extent, at least). Conscious efforts are needed, not only to improve that communication, but also that more difficult kind, which calls for attempts to become involved in ways of thinking that are quite different from those which are far too often peculiar to the ivory tower of educational philosophers solely.

The difficulty in direct communication involving the gap between the realm of educational theory and the realm in which that theory may someday become effective is a species of a genus of problems in almost any realm of intellectual life; for example, literature, law, theology, and the like. It is the hope of some that, in a democracy, all individuals can become intelligent about the forces among which their lives go on. And it is the further hope that the schools can become a significant institution for realizing that intelligence which perhaps has been more potential than actual up to now. There seems to be a crying need, in the pressure of today's events, to appeal to the intelligence even now realized in that potentiality, and to seek ways in which those individuals can make the best use of that intelligence in discussing problems which ought to be of concern to both the educational philosopher and the common man.

In brief, attempts are needed here and now, in the "short run," to make sense out of educational theory in the market place of ideas. Perhaps a more honest consideration of the ideas and sentiments of the relatively unlettered on the part of the "intellectuals" would help to make more meaningful those notions that have been put forth again and again about the potential worth of all sorts of endeavors of men: *e.g.*, the claim that beauty is not a quality of certain so-called "works of art" alone, but is potentially a quality of all sorts of "ordinary" activities; the claim that the "good" and the "religious" are not peculiar to certain objects and writings alone, but are potentially qualities of a vast, largely untapped universe

of a society's inheritance; the claim that the "intellectual" is not a modifier of specific subject matters alone, but is potentially a characteristic of those endeavors which have been called "practical" or "vocational" merely; and so on and on.

It seems that if such notions are ever to become anything other than theories merely, *i.e.*, if ideas are turned into working-hypotheses to be tried out in the flow of experience — there ought to be attempts to make meaningful, in the thinking of a much wider population, the efforts of such manner of theorists as are educational philosophers. To do so would call for serious and honest attempts at sympathetic understanding, on the part of the populace for the kind of work which educational theorists do, and, in turn, on the part of educational theorists for the kinds of work and ways of thinking of the populace. The lack of such attempts at the present time might well become a concern for serious consideration by educational philosophers.

Ideas have been expressed in the preceding pages about the proper role of the educational philosopher in relation to himself and others. They have been stated in a variety of ways. The discussion has not been intended to conclude any such future activity, as it is known such a limited effort should and would not do. It is hoped, however, that more men can take more time from day-to-day exigencies to reflect publicly their beliefs, concerns, and dispositions about education — its new directions; thus, the role of the educational philosopher can know new dimensions of discipline and purpose.

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